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ABSTRACT

The socialization processes occurring in the Japanese elementary school classroom are analyzed, particularly the processes that are implicit, teaching children to be competent members of society by participating in detail routines. A perspective is that the specific participation structure of Japanese classrooms serves as a major socialization resource for Japanese children to acquire attentive listening skills. Data are drawn from 15 hours of audiotaped interaction in 5 classrooms (2 third-grade, 3 fourth-grade) of about 40 children each, in 4 different Japanese schools. The analysis looks at two participant structures (dyadic, typical of American classrooms, and the "interactional umbrella" or multi-party interaction more common in Japanese classrooms), the roles of peer students and teacher as evaluators and supporters of individual student response, the teacher's role as a facilitator of listening, and socialization for listening as part of Japanese cultural patterns. It is concluded that throughout the participation in Japanese classroom interaction, students are socialized to be competent listeners, and also develop other cognitive and social skills by taking part in this participant structure, helping them to be good group members. Contains 27 references. (MSE)

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Listening as a Part of Socialization in Japanese Elementary Schools

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1. Introduction

This paper examines Japanese elementary school classroom interaction from the perspective of language socialization articulated by Ochs and Schieffelin (1984), Schieffelin and Ochs (1986a, 1986b) and Ochs (1984, 1988). This perspective proposes that children acquire sociocultural knowledge by participating in language-mediated interactions. Language socialization can be both explicit and implicit. Explicit socialization takes place when caregivers explicitly teach social norms. Implicit socialization is a process in which children learn to be competent members of society by participating in daily routines. Since sociocultural information is encoded in the organization of discourse, daily participation in every day activities has a great impact on children's social and cognitive development.

Although implicit language socialization is not as obvious as explicit one, it is pervasive. In Ochs' words (1990: 291), "the greatest part of sociocultural information is keyed implicitly, through language use." This paper discusses both explicit and implicit socialization processes in Japanese elementary schools but in particular it focusses

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on implicit socialization. It suggests that the Japanese specific classroom participant structure (Philips 1972) serves as one of the major socialization resources for Japanese children in acquiring the skill of attentive listening.

The data for the present study come from fifteen-hours of audio-taped classroom interactions of five classes in four different schools in the Tokyo area. Two of the classes are third grade classes and three are fourth. There are three male and two female teachers whose ages range from the late twenty's to approximately mid forty's. All classes are coeducational and each of them consists of about 40 children.

Findings of the recent studies of social interaction are that compared with Americans, Japanese are more listening-oriented (Clancy 1986; Hayashi 1988; Maynard 1989; Morikawa 1995; White 1989; Yamada 1992). Clancy (1986), for example, mentions that unlike the American interaction, in which the speaker is responsible for the clarity of message, in Japanese interaction the responsibility rests on the listener to figure out any unclarity in the speaker's utterance. The studies by Maynard (1989), Morikawa (1995) and Yamada (1992) have found that Japanese listeners use back-channels more frequently than American listeners. In short, more significance is attached to the role of the

listener in Japanese conversation than in American. That is, in Japanese conversation the listener's active participation is crucial in sense making.[1] The importance of listening is also manifest in the appearance of *Kikite* the `listener role' in many TV news programs (Lebra 1993). The main function of *kikite* is to provide backchannels to soften the tone of the news program. Furthermore, there is a Japanese proverb, *Kenja wa kyuu itte ichi shaberu* `a wise man listens nine and speaks one', which emphasizes the importance of listening. These facts imply that for Japanese the skill of attentive listening is significant part of communicative competence.

How do Japanese children acquire this competence? Apparently, both at home and school adults explicitly teach children to listen attentively.[2] Clancy (1986), who studied the interaction between mothers and young children, reports that mothers consistently make sure that young children listen and respond when they are addressed. Anderson's study (1995) indicates that elementary school teachers are similar to mothers in that they often remind students to pay attention to the peers' talk in class. He reports that in the class he observed, the teacher often asked students whether they had been listening to their peers' presentations. He states (1995: 113), "clearly then, listening was an important expectation made of students in

Natsuki-sensei's class."[1] Explicit language socialization that promoted listening was observed in the five classes I visited as well. The teachers of these classes made sure that all the students in class listened to the peers' talk. (In example (1) Ms. W asks her students if they could hear Ishikawa-san's presentation. While Ishikawa-san was giving her presentation, the bell rang and her voice was difficult to hear.) In Japanese classes all the students are called by their last name with *san* for girls and with *kun* for boys:

(1) [Ms. W's class, third grade]

Ishikawa: Atashi wa Furukawa-san no kabutomushi ga ii to omoimashita.
`I thought that Furukawa-san's (story on) beetles was good."
[
((bell rings))

Ms. W: ((to the class))
Kikoetaa?
`Did you hear (her)?'

In example (2), which comes from Mr. K's third grade class, he makes sure that everyone hears the peers' talk. In line 13 Mr. K. tells Tamura-kun to speak loudly. Then in line 18, he checks if Fukushima-san's utterance was heard by a few students who did not seem to pay attention to her talk. In line 18 he requests that Fukushima-san turn toward the back of the classroom so that her voice can be heard

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better. In line 20, he repeats this request when she does not comply with this request in line 19.

(2) [Mr. K's class, third grade]

[Initiation]

1. T: Doo deshoo, Takegami-kun (ikimashoo) hai.
`How about, Takegami-kun, (Let's go) yes.'

[Presentation]

2. Takegami: ((stands up)) Kamotsuressha. Gachan gachan gachan gachan gachan gacha gacha:n gachan gatan goton gatan goton gatan goton goto gata goto gata goto gata gota gata gatagoto gatagoto gatagoto gatagoto gatagoto gatagoto gatagoto gotogata kotokoto kotokata kotokata kotokata kotokata kotokoto.
`Cargo train [reads aloud the sounds of a train]'

3. ((Ss laugh))

4. ((Ss raise hands and are talking))

5. T: Doo yuu toko umakatta, ima no? Takegami-kun.
`What was good, this one, Takegami-kun'(s)?'

6. ((Ss raise hands))

7. T: Higuchi-san.

[Reaction 1]

8. Higuchi: ((stands up)) Saigo no kotokata tte yuu tokoro no oto ga chan to hayakatta.
`The last sound, kotokata was (said) properly fast.'

9. T: Ha::i.
`Ye:s'
Hoka ni.
`Anything else?'

10 ((S raise hands))

11. T: Tamura-kun.

[Reaction 2]

12. Tamura: ((stands up)) Ugoite (ru toka ni)
`Movi (ng like)'

13. T: Ookii koe de.
`In a loud voice.'

[Reaction 2]

14. Tamura: ((keep standing up)) Ugoiteru toka (wakaru yoo ni)
`so that we'd know it's moving'

15. T: Yutte ita. Un.
`(he) was saying. Uhun.'

Fukushima-san.

[Reaction 3]

16. Fukushima: ((stands up)) Tamura-kun to niteru n desu keredo, ano: chan to koe- koe ni natte hakkiri yonde imashita.
`(Mine) is similar to Tamura-kun's but, uh (he) was using his voice and was reading clearly'

17. ((students talking & making noise))

18. T: Hai. Fukushima-san no yutta koto kikoemashita kaa. Akabane-kun kikoetaa? Kikoeta tte yuu ka, kiite ita? Suzuki-kun daijoobu?
`Yes. Did you hear what Fukushima-san said? Did you hear, Akabane-kun? Were you listening? Are you with us, Suzuki-kun?'

((to Fukushima)) Moo ikkai yutte, ushiro ni mukatte.
`Say it once more to the back (of the class).'

[Reaction 3]

19. Fukushima: Tamura-kun ni niteru n ((does not turn back))
`(It's) like Teramura-kun's.'

20. T:=Ushiro ni mukatte.=
`Turn toward the back (of the classroom)'

[Reaction 3]

21. Fukushima: ((turns to back)) =Tamura-kun ni niteru n desu keredo, chan to koe ni natte hakkiri yonde iru.
`(Mine) is like Tamura-kun's, (he)

was using his voice and was reading clearly.'

22. T: Hai. Nanka ii koto arimasu ka?
'yes, is there anything good (about Takegami's presentation)?

Jaa moo hitori yonde moraoo kana, moo hitori (0.1) moo hitori.
'Well, I will have one more person read it, one more (0.1) one more.'

From these observations of explicit socialization, we can generalize that listening is an important expectation and skill in Japanese society.

While explicit socialization is important in teaching children the value of attentive listening, we also assume that children are implicitly socialized to be good listeners by participating in daily activities both at home and school. The rest of the paper focuses on implicit language socialization in classroom interactions. I will demonstrate that children are socialized to be good listeners through participation in the Japanese specific non-dyadic participant structure.

2. Participant Structures: dyadic vs. "interactional umbrella"

In American classrooms the preferred participant structure of instruction is dyadic, in which a three-part sequence, Initiation-Reply-Evaluation (I-R-E henceforth) takes place between the teacher and one student at a time (Mehan 1979;

Shultz, Florio and Erickson 1982). A typical example is given in (3), which comes form Mehan (1979:92).

(3) Initiation	Reply	Evaluation
T: I call the tractor a "mm..."	R: Machine	T: Machine, Rafael good, I call it a machine.
T: See the ...	J: Street.	T: Street, good, "see the street."

The interaction in (3) is dyadic; Each question involves the teacher and just one student at a time. Furthermore, each time a student responds, the teacher evaluates the response with the term, *good*, a marker of evaluation. Other such markers include *very good*, *all right* and *OK*. They index the teacher as someone who is an authority of knowledge with respect to the content of the class instruction. In addition, as discussed by Duranti and Ochs (1986), the teacher's evaluation marker simultaneously indexes that the correct answer is a student's individual accomplishment. In uttering *good*, in Duranti and Ochs' words (1986:229), "the adult does not take (or get) credit for her or his part in accomplishing a task; rather, the child is given full credit through unidirectional praising."

In the dyadic participant structure, the teacher is the evaluator, who is the source and authority of knowledge and who passes judgement on children's responses. Thus, students

are encouraged to i) focus on the teacher's utterances; ii) answer the teacher's question correctly so that they are praised for their accomplishment. In this participant structure, there is little need or motivation to listen to their peers.

Anderson (1995) proposes, in contrast, that in Japanese classrooms the preferred participant structure is that of an "interactional umbrella", a multi-party interactional pattern. In the interactional umbrella, the teacher's role is not to hold one-on-one interaction with a student but to structure interaction among students. In fact, the Japanese teachers and educators I interviewed repeatedly expressed the view that the teacher's role is to support (*shien*) class interactions but not to direct them. The interactional umbrella is achieved by a four-part sequence of recitation instead of three; namely, Initiation-Presentation-Reaction-Evaluation (I-P-Rx-E) (Anderson 1995). Anderson's findings are that in the I-P-Rx-E sequence each part is distributed to different speakers: Initiation (I) and evaluation (E) turns belong to the teacher; Presentation (P), to a primary student participant; and Reaction turns (R), to secondary student participants.

Example (4), which comes form Anderson (1995: 231), illustrates the I-P-Rx-E sequence.

(4)

Initiation	Presentation	Reaction	Evaluation
T:ne..dewa kore wa nan no tame ni reizooko ni ireru deshoo ka. [Okay? Now, why do you put (fish) in the freezer?]			
	Ss(raising hands): hai! [Yes!]		
T: Yonekawa-san			
	Yonekawa (stands): kusaranai yoo ni suru tame desu. [It is so that it does not rot.]		
		S1: ii desu! [good!]	
		S2: onaji desu! [I have the same.]	
			T: kusaranai yoo ni suru. [So that it doesn't rot.]

It is the reaction (R) turns that make the participant structure non-dyadic. In reaction turns peer students provide their additional comments on the primary student participant's presentation. The additional comments in reaction turns can be another presentation. But often these comments take the form of peer evaluation or express how they are related to the prior utterances. Typically more than one student give reactions. The evaluation (E) turn in I-P-Rx-E also differs from that of I-R-E in that rarely the teacher uses markers of evaluation such as *good, very good,* and *all right*. The teacher, in the evaluation (E) turn,

either signals that the class heard the students' utterances or gives a supportive comment. These characteristics associated with reaction and evaluation turns create a context in which i) true evaluation often comes from the peer students but not from the teacher; ii) as the result, the source and authority of knowledge concerning the content of the class rests mainly on the peer students; iii) the role of the teacher is that of a facilitator/supporter who mostly helps smooth interaction among students and affectively backs them up.

3. Evaluators and supporter: Role of the peer students and the teacher

The identities of the student as evaluator and of the teacher as supporter are created during the interaction which consists of students' comments on the presentation and of the teacher's affective stance toward the students. As mentioned earlier, it is in reaction (R) that students often serve as evaluators of the presenter.[4] In example (4), Students 1 and 2 offer their reactions to Yonekawa-san's presentation. More specifically, Student 1 positively evaluates Yonekawa-san's response by saying *ii desu* `it is good' and Student 2 states his opinion in relation to hers. The reaction, *ii desu* `it is good' is an evaluative remark

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that is typically made by the teacher in American classrooms. The utterances by Students 1 and 2 both underscore correctness of Yonekawa-san's answer. In contrast to the peer's evaluation, the teacher's stance is more affective than evaluative. In the last line in (4), she repeats Yonekawa-san's utterance. Repetition is a marker of joint production and indexes the speaker's endorsement of another's utterance (Stubbs 1983). In sum, while the peers provide evaluations, the teacher's utterance tends to lack evaluative words such as *good* and indexes affective stance. Thus the teacher creates her own image as a affective supporter of his/her students.

More examples of peer evaluation and the teacher's supportive role are seen in (2). Here the class is studying a poem on a cargo train made up of the onomatopoetic sounds of a train. Mr. K., like the teacher in example (4), does not use markers of evaluation such as *good*. In line 15 in (2), Mr. K co-constructs a turn with Tamura-kun, whose turn was incomplete. Then he says *un* `uhun' with a falling intonation, which acknowledges Tamura-kun's answer rather than evaluates it. This *un* gives credit to Tamura-kun even though his answer was incomplete.

In lines 9, 18 and 22 Mr. K says *hai* `yes'. In line 9 he says *ha:i* `ye:s' after Higuchi-san's reaction. He said it with a prolonged [a] and a singsong intonation. Then he asks

students if there are any other reactions. In line 18, he uses *hai* to preface his concern as to whether the students have heard Fukushima-san's reaction. In line 22, after Fukushima-san's reaction, he again utters *hai* 'yes'. Since they are not immediately followed by evaluative words or phrases, these *hai*'s are not markers of evaluation. They are immediately followed by the teacher's solicitation of the next speaker. Thus the *hai* 'yes' here is a marker of a new turn and/or a topic but not that of evaluation. This function of *hai* 'yes' frequently occurs in the teachers' talk as shown in example (5).

(5) [Mr. K's class, third grade]

((The class has started and Mr. K is talking to students))

Mr. K: Nooto o hiraite, kyookasho wa (shimau)n da yo.
Sore de kankei nai mono wa tsukue no naka ni shimainasai.
'Open the notebook and put away the textbook. And put unrelated things in the desk (drawer).'

((Students put their textbooks away and open the notebook.))

Mr. K: Hai. Ii desu ka? Tegami ni tsuite yaru n dakedo, tegami tte donna mono desu ka?'
'Yes. Are you with us? We are going to study letters, but what is a letter?'

In (5) once the students put away the textbook and opened the notebook, Mr. K initiates by saying *hai* the topic of the day's lesson, "letters". Since there is no student's utterance which immediately precedes *hai*, it is clear that

this *hai* is not a marker of evaluation. It rather serves as a topic opener for the following utterance.

These examples demonstrate that *hai* 'yes' or *un* 'uhun' are not markers of evaluation.

In contrast, students provide their reaction to the presenter. All three reactions in (2) are detailed evaluations of Takegami-kun's recitation. Higuichi-san critically but positively evaluates the presenter's recitation by saying *chanto hayakatta* '(It was) properly fast.' Teramura-kun's comment describes the clear manner in which the recitation was presented. These comments can be made only if they listened to the presentation well. Moreover, in lines 16, 19 and 21, Fukushima-san expresses how her evaluation is related to Tamura-kun's reaction, which requires careful comparison of her own and others' reactions. This, of course can be done only by listening attentively to the prior utterances. Takegami-kun, the presenter, also needs to listen to the reactions of the peers in order to find out how his presentation went. Virtual lack of the teacher's evaluation markers gives students' reactions more importance in that they are the source of knowledge with respect to the content of a lesson. In this way, the reactions promote attentive listening to the peer students' utterances.

4. Teacher's role as a facilitator of listening

The teacher controls the structure of peer interaction in such a way that creates more opportunities for students to listen carefully to the peers. Instead of evaluating students' presentations her/himself, S/he solicits students to comment on the presenter's performance, which creates multiple reaction (R) turns. In (2) after Takegami-kun presents his recitation, Mr. K solicits three reactions from the students. In response to his solicitation, many students raise hand, which indicates that many listened to the presentation attentively enough to give comments on it.

When the teacher's expectation that students should listen attentively is not met, s/he tries to make sure that they listen. S/he explicitly asks students if they were listening as we have seen earlier, or s/he uses a more subtle strategy of dropping a hint that his/her expectation has not been met.

In example (6), which comes from another school, the teacher, Ms. R, implies that her expectation has not been met. Here Takahashi-san has just presented her view on country and city life. After her presentation, only two students raise their hand when the teacher solicits students' comments on it. In line 4, Ms. R's utterance, 'I wonder if no one but Kato-kun and Moro-kun can find them'

reflects her expectation that more students should have listened to the presentation well and should bid for reactions. In line 6, Ms. R requests more detail from Kato-kun, which again reflects her expectation of careful attention to the peer presentation.

(6) [Ms. R' class, fourth grade]

[Takahashi-san has just finished reading her short written essay to the class.]

1. Ss: ((applaud))

2. T: Hai doo deshoo, ii tokoro. !Koko joozu ni kaketeru naa!
`Well, what were the good points? !This part is well written!'

3. ((Kato-kun and Moro-kun raise their hand))

4. T: Kato-kun to Moro-kun shika mitsukerarenai no kanaa.
`I wonder if no one but Kato-kun and Moro-kun can find them.'

Hai, Kato-kun.
`Yes, Kato-kun.'

5. Kato: Muzukashii kotoba ga tsukatte aru.
`A difficult word was used.'

6. T: Muzukashii kotoba ga tsukatte aru. Nan deshoo.
`A difficult word was used. What is it?'

7. Kato: Koogai.
`Pollution.'

8. T: Koogai? Koogai.
`Pollution? Pollution.'

In this way the teacher as facilitator provides students with more opportunities to listen to their peers by

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creating reaction turns and stating the importance of attentive listening explicitly and implicitly.

The peers also help facilitate listening. Often when students cannot hear their peers' presentation or reaction, they call out *kikoemasen* `I cannot hear' to request the speaker to speak loudly. Students also give a meta-comment as to how their peers should behave, which reflects their understanding of expected behavior in the classroom. Example (7) illustrates the student's meta-comment reflecting his expectation that one should listen carefully to the peer's speech.

(7) [Mr. K's class, third grade]

1. T: Hoka ni?
`Any other?'

2. ((Students raise hands))

3. T: Kondoo-kun

4. Kondoo: Sukoshi nite iru n da kedo kisetsu no aisatsu.
`(Mine) is a little similar (to the previous one), but seasonal greetings.'

5. T: ((Tamura did not listen to Kondoo's response.))
Tamura-kun Kondoo-kun yutta no de ii?
`Tamura-kun, is what Kondoo-kun said OK?'

6. Tamura: ((silence))
[
7. ((Students talk))

8. T: Ii no?
`Is it OK?'

9. S1: Tamura-kun kiite nakatta ( ).
`Tamura-kun was not listening ( )'

In (7) Mr. K's class is learning about letters. He has just asked the class what should be written at the beginning of a letter. After a few reactions, he solicits more reactions in line 1. When Kondoo-kun finishes his turn, Mr. K asks Tamura-kun if Kondoo-kun's answer is OK in line 5. He knows that Tamura-kun was not listening and thus he will not be able to answer his question. For this reason, the speech act of Mr. K.'s utterance is a reprimand, although it is subtle. Tamura-kun in line 6 is unable to answer and in line 8 Mr. K. repeats his question. Then in line 9 one of the students calls out that Tamura-kun was not listening. This is a meta-comment on what happened in the interaction, which implies that the proper classroom behavior was not observed.

In sum, the teacher as well as students implicitly and explicitly point to the underlying assumption that good listening is an indispensable part of classroom activities.

5. Socialization for listening as part of Japanese cultural pattern

As we have discussed so far, Japanese classroom interaction is characterized by peer evaluation in multi-reaction turns within the sequence of I-P-Rx-E and by the teacher's role as facilitator. These characteristics create a locus of knowledge among the peer students, and {thus authority for

assessing does not solely reside in the teacher but it gets distributed to the peer students as well.} This interactional pattern of elementary school classrooms is part of an overall pattern of activities in Japanese nursery and elementary schools. Ethnographic studies of Japanese nursery schools by Lewis (1984), Tobin et.al. (1992) and Peak (1991) as well as of elementary schools by Lewis (1988), which observe daily routines of school life, all report self-management of activities by children and minimized authority of the teacher. For example, observing nursery schools, Lewis (1984:83) states, "Peers, not teachers, may have authority to manage aspects of classroom life ranging from participation in class events and finishing one's lunch to fights with other children." Peer evaluations in reaction turns, then, is seen as one of the manifestations of the overall pattern of the daily routine at school.

6. Conclusion

As proposed by Ochs and Schieffelin, much of sociocultural knowledge is transmitted in discourse. In this paper I have discussed that in Japanese elementary school classroom interaction, students are both explicittly and implicitly taught to listen carefully. I have demonstrated that peer evaluations and minimized teacher's authority within the frame of the non-dyadic I-P-Rx-E sequence encourage students

to listen attentively to their peers. In other words, throughout the participation in the Japanese classroom interaction, Japanese children were socialized to be competent listeners. This study also implicates that school children develop not only listening skills but other cognitive and social skills by taking part in this participant structure. As a result of attentive listening, they will be able to compare their opinion with others'. This will socialize them to consider their own position in relation to others, which make them think how they fit in the group. Thus, I speculate that listening to peer's speech in the classroom also helps children to be good group members.

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[1] . This, of course, does not mean that in American conversation the listener is passive. Studies in conversation analysis (e.g. Goodwin 1986; Sacks and Schegloff 1979; Schegloff 1982) demonstrate that the listener actively participate in conversation by providing continuers and assessments. However, the fact that speech-act theory is based on the speaker's intention suggests that the American (perhaps the western) society places a value on the speaker rather than on the listener.

[2]. Middle class white American caregivers generally socialize children to speak but rarely tell them to listen to others (Poole, personal communication). This fact suggests that listening is less important than speaking in middle class American society.

[3]. The term *sensei* means 'teacher' and *Natsuki-sensei* is equivalent of Ms. Natsuki.

[4]. Anderson (1995) mentions that the meaning of reaction is to acknowlege peer's presentation and add to it. My proposal that the reaction turn functions as an evaluation does not disagree with Andersons' claim since "evaluation" does not necessarily mean a negative one. Lewis (1988) also mentions

that in the elementary school classes she observed in Tokyo students were involved in peer evaluation.